**A guide to the linguistic and stylistic analysis of a passage from Chaucer’s *The Canterbury Tales (CT)***

(1) What to do?

* Choose any passage of ca. 20-25 lines from a Middle English edition of CT.
* Indicate precisely the source of your passage (bibliographic data of the edition and the location of the passage in the CT).
* Before preparing the analysis, plan what and how you want to analyse.

(2) Parts of the analysis

2.1 Obligatory parts:

* An individual modern English (or Hungarian) translation of the passage.
* A summary of the passage in your own words.
* An explanation of the context of the passage: in which part of CT it is located; where does it occur in the respective tale or prologue.
* Identify the speakers and the characters of the passage.
* Explain the significance of the passage within the context. Provide your own understanding of the passage with due support.
* Point out the major aspects of interpretation: what makes the passage problematic, unique, outstanding, contradictory or difficult to interpret, etc. What is the major role of the passage in the context of the tale/prologue (description, dialogue, characterization, narrator’s intervention, moralizing, humour, irony, summary, etc.)
* Identify the major aspects of language that can support an interpretation of the text, such as e.g. vocabulary, syntax, rhetoric, key phrases, grammatical structures, pragmatic aspects of language, style and tone, etc.
* Prepare a linguistic analysis of the text involving 3 to 5 different aspects. The analysis should support your individual understanding/interpretation of the passage.
* Comment on the style of the passage and provide adequate illustration.

2.2 Optional parts (involve 2 from this list):

* Look for the broader context of the passage (other locations in CT, broader context of medieval literature and rhetoric, sources of medieval history and society).
* Discuss the ways in which the modern editorial decisions (spelling, capitalization, structuring the sentences that may be structured otherwise as well, editorial notes, footnotes and glossaries) suggest interpretations.
* Point out ambiguities in meaning and the linguistic means that create ambiguities.
* Consult some other modern English or Hungarian translations and discuss where interpretations strikingly differ. Where do the translations differ from your own interpretation? What might be the reason for the very different solutions in the translations?
* Find literary parallels or the eventual textual sources that underlay the composition of your selected passage. If the source is not in English, how did Chaucer use his material in translation? If you find an English parallel, how does it contrast to Chaucer’s treatment?
* Do background research on Chaucer’s rare vocabulary: check the Oxford English Dictionary (OED, available in the Faculty Library) or the online or printed Middle English Dictionary in connection with the use of some particular and rare vocabulary in Chaucer’s time.

(3) Design of the analysis

You are free to design the form and the arrangement of your material. You are expected to present your analysis in a transparent, clear, well-structured and logical way.

(4) Statement on plagiarism

Academic research and its presentation are embedded in a large dialogue. In the process of thinking and arguing we are necessarily influenced by others: we borrow ideas from other writings and integrate them into our own. You can use others’ ideas or words in form of literal quotes or paraphrases, but you must indicate the source of quotes, paraphrased passages, and all sorts of factual information in all cases. The failure of keeping a correct record of borrowed material, either due to ignorance or to deliberate theft of ideas, is plagiarism. Papers showing evident signs of plagiarism will fail.